

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10
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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1407
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AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
USINT HAVANA
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SUBJECT: SOME SOVIET STATISTICS ON COMMODITY TRADE
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SUMMARY: FOR FIRST TIME PARTIAL STATISTICS ON SOVIET
FOREIGN TRADE IN 1977 BY COMMODITIES HAVE APPEARED IN
SOVIET PRESS. THESE FIGURES REVEAL THAT DESPITE SLOW-DOWN
IN IMPORTS FROM WEST AND INCREASED SPECIALIZATION IN CEMA,
40 PERCENT OF SOVIET IMPORTS OF MACHINERY, EQUIPMENT AND

MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION WERE FROM WESTERN COUNTRIES. THE FRG WAS BY FAR THE LEADING WESTERN EXPORTER TO THE USSR IN THIS CATEGORY WHILE THE U.S. OCCUPIED SIXTH PLACE. HOWEVER TENDENTIOUS THE ARGUMENT MAY BE, SOVIET OFFICIALS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY USE SUCH FIGURES TO REINFORCE THEIR CONTENTION THAT PRESENT U.S. TRADE LEGISLATION SUBSTANTIALLY IMPAIRS SOVIET IMPORTS OF MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT FROM THE U.S. SOVIET ENERGY EXPORTS ACCOUNTED FOR 35 PERCENT OF TOTAL SOVIET EXPORTS, WITH EXPORTS OF OIL AND OIL PRODUCTS ALONE ACCOUNTING FOR 28 PERCENT. THIS UNDERLINES EXTREME IMPORTANCE OF THESE EXPORTS FOR SOVIET EXPORT EARNINGS. END SUMMARY.

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. SOVIETS HAVE PUBLISHED THE FIRST PARTIAL STATISTICS ON THE COMMODITY COMPONENT IN SOVIET FOREIGN TRADE IN 1977. LONG ARTICLE IN EKONOMICHESKAYA GAZETA NO. 18 BY V.I. KLOCHEK, CHIEF OF MAIN PLANNING AND ECONOMIC ADMINISTRATION AND MEMBER OF THE COLLEGIUM OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE, FOLLOWS GENERAL LINE OF PRAVDA ARTICLE BY FOREIGN TRADE MINISTER PATOLICHEV (REFTTEL) BUT PROVIDES MORE DETAILS ON SOVIET FOREIGN TRADE IN 1977, INCLUDING SOME PREVIOUSLY UNPUBLISHED FIGURES ON TRADE IN INDIVIDUAL COMMODITY CATEGORIES.

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2. SOVIET MACHINERY IMPORTS: MACHINES, EQUIPMENT AND MEANS OF TRANSPORT ACCOUNTED FOR 11.5 BILLION RUBLES, OR 38.1 PERCENT OF ALL IMPORTS, COMPARED TO 36.3 PERCENT IN 1976. THIS FIGURE INCLUDES 450 MILLION RUBLES FOR METALLURGICAL EQUIPMENT, 1.7 BILLION RUBLES FOR CHEMICAL EQUIPMENT, 689 MILLION RUBLES FOR LIGHT AND FOOD INDUSTRY EQUIPMENT AND 540 MILLION RUBLES FOR AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY. THE USSR IMPORTED METALLURGICAL AND FORGING-PRESSING MACHINE TOOLS WORTH 597 MILLION RUBLES, COMMERCIAL VEHICLES AND GARAGE EQUIPMENT VALUED AT 765 MILLION RUBLES, AND SHIPS AND SHIPS EQUIPMENT VALUED AT 918 MILLION RUBLES. THE SHARE OF "SOCIALIST" COUNTRIES IN THESE IMPORTS WAS 60.8 PERCENT; INDIVIDUAL "SOCIALIST" COUNTRY SHARES (IN MILLIONS OF RUBLES) WERE: GDR 1,991; CZECHOSLOVAKIA 1,289; BULGARIA 1,101; POLAND 1,071; AND HUNGARY 896. SHARES OF MAJOR WESTERN TRADING PARTNERS IN THIS CATEGORY OF SOVIET IMPORTS WERE: FRG 1,042; JAPAN 685; FINLAND 668; FRANCE 566; ITALY 488; USA 351.

3. SOVIET IMPORTS OF RAW MATERIALS AND SEMI-FINISHED PRODUCTS: IN 1977 THE SOVIETS IMPORTED 738 MILLION RUBLES WORTH OF ROLLED FERROUS METALS, 808 MILLION RUBLES OF

STEEL PIPE, 614 MILLION RUBLES OF CHEMICAL PRODUCTS, 89
MILLION RUBLES OF DRESSED SKINS, 200,000 TONS OF
CELLULOSE, 112,000 TONS OF WOOL, 94,000 TONS OF COTTON,
43,000 TONS OF TECHNICAL-GRADE OILS, 450,000 TONS OF
VARIOUS PAPERS, 45,000 TONS OF COFFEE, 73,000 TONS OF
COCOA BEANS, 60,000 TONS OF TEA, 617,000 TONS OF MEAT
AND MEAT PRODUCTS, 841,000 TONS OF FRESH FRUITS, 4.3
MILLION TONS OF SUGAR AND 700 MILLION EGGS.

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4. SOVIET EXPORTS: SOVIET ENERGY EXPORTS ACCOUNTED FOR
SIGNIFICANT PART OF TOTAL SOVIET EXPORTS. IN 1977 USSR

EXPORTED OIL AND OIL PRODUCTS VALUED AT 9.4 BILLION RUBLES,
GAS AT 1 BILLION RUBLES, ELECTRICITY AT 200 MILLION RUBLES
AND SOLID FUELS AT 1 BILLION RUBLES. EXPORTS TO CEMA
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COUNTRIES ACCOUNTED FOR LARGE PART OF THESE
EXPORTS: 3.8 BILLION RUBLES OF OIL AND OIL PRODUCTS, 600
MILLION RUBLES OF SOLID FUELS, 500 MILLION RUBLES OF GAS.
OTHER EXPORT PRODUCTS ACCOUNTED FOR ARE: 289 MILLION
RUBLES OF CAST IRON, 1.2 BILLION RUBLES OF ROLLED FERROUS
METALS, 940 MILLION RUBLES OF CHEMICAL PRODUCTS,
17.7 MILLION CUBIC METERS OF COMMERCIAL TIMBER, 8.3 MILLION
CUBIC METERS OF SAWN LUMBER, 680,000 TONS OF CELLULOSE,
622,000 TONS OF PAPER AND 394,000 TONS OF CARDBOARD.
FIGURES FOR SOVIET EXPORTS OF CONSUMER PRODUCTS ARE: 12.7
MILLION WATCHES, 430,000 SQUARE METERS OF CARPETS, 1.3
MILLION RADIOS, 503,000 TELEVISION SETS, 980,000 CAMERAS.
ARTICLE REVEALS THAT OF 6.3 BILLION RUBLES WORTH OF
.MACHINERY, EQUIPMENT AND MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION THE USSR
EXPORTED IN 1977, 4.9 BILLION RUBLES WORTH WENT TO
"SOCIALIST" COUNTRIES.

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5. COMMENT: DESPITE SLOWDOWN IN IMPORTS FROM THE WEST
AND INCREASED SPECIALIZATION WITHIN CEMA, IT IS INTERESTING
TO NOTE THAT THE SIX OECD COUNTRIES NAMED ACCOUNTED FOR ONE.
THIRD OF THE USSR'S IMPORTS OF MACHINERY, EQUIPMENT, AND
MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION. FROM FIGURES GIVEN FOR SUCH
IMPORTS FROM "SOCIALIST" COUNTRIES, WE ASSUME THAT WESTERN
COUNTRIES ACCOUNTED FOR APPROXIMATELY 40 PERCENT OF THIS
CATEGORY. THIS WOULD INDICATE THAT APPROXIMATELY 46
PERCENT OF SOVIET IMPORTS FROM WESTERN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES
FELL INTO THIS CATEGORY. THE U.S. POSITION IN THIS
CATEGORY (SIXTH) WAS WELL BELOW ITS RANK ORDER AMONG
WESTERN COUNTRIES FOR GENERAL SOVIET IMPORTS (THIRD). WE
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WOULD EXPECT SOVIET OFFICIALS TO USE SUCH FIGURES TO
REINFORCE THEIR POSITION - HOWEVER TENDENTIOUS IT MAY BE -
ON THE RESTRICTIVE EFFECTS OF PRESENT U.S. TRADE LEGIS-
LATION ON SOVIET IMPORTS FROM THE U.S. OF MACHINERY AND
EQUIPMENT.

6. THE FIGURES ON SOVIET COMMODITY EXPORTS UNDERLINE THE VERY GREAT IMPORTANCE SOVIET ENERGY EXPORTS CONTINUE TO PLAY IN THEIR TOTAL EXPORT PERFORMANCE. THESE ACCOUNT FOR 35 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL VALUE OF SOVIET EXPORTS, WITH EXPORTS OF OIL AND OIL PRODUCTS ALONE ACCOUNTING FOR 28 PERCENT. THE LATTER GREW BY 1.7 BILLION RUBLES (18 PERCENT) OVER 1976. SINCE ONLY VALUE FIGURES ARE GIVEN, IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO JUDGE WHAT PERCENTAGE OF SOVIET EXPORTS OF OIL AND OIL PRODUCTS IN QUANTITATIVE TERMS WENT TO WESTERN COUNTRIES, BUT IN VALUE TERMS IT WAS PROBABLY OVER HALF. FOR OTHER SOVIET EXPORTS IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT SOVIET EXPORTS OF ROLLED FERROUS METALS REMAINED STAGNANT, WHEREAS EXPORTS OF CHEMICAL PRODUCTS TRIPLED IN VALUE COMPARED TO 1976. TOON

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